because he was so tall, and the Matacos called Quiatzutaj, which means Vilelón (large Vilela Indian--Translator), because of his national origin and size, when I asked him how things were going with him replied: "Well...I,...I rich...I having...much... algarrobo pods...I rich." They are miserly with these pods and with aloja, to the extent that they will not barter them except on very rare occasions. Only in a niggardly way and half heartedly will they invite anyone to share their aloja.

One morning I came upon a group of some forty Indians who were sitting around a yuchan of aloja. When I made my appearance and as soon as they recognized me they all began to shout: "John, John...yúc-cu-ás...yúc-cu-ás" (tobacco, tobacco), and I answered "hué-ni-tdé: niquiolá pac" (I have none, later I shall give you some). Only then did they invite me to drink with them and at my first refusal did not insist a second time, the chief saying to me -- "No my child...no...we...taking...you giving...tobacco." This was by way of politeness, in the Indian manner to be sure, but politeness nonetheless. I, to please them, made some effort to speak a few words to them in their own language and finally took my leave saying: "Amecná, nu yopil nuháuet...nutpinlá pac...niquioc-la yuc-cu-as..." (Goodbye, I am going home...I shall come back right away...I shall give tobacco). And all of them, full of pleasure because I spoke to them in their language and promised them tobacco shouted: "Amecná... amecná...tapil...ccaelitt (Goodbye, goodbye, come back soon). I returned after two or three hours with my pockets bursting with cut tobacco [190] and found all of them still drinking. As soon as they saw me they reminded me of my promise, which I thought they might have forgotten amidst the fumes of drunkenness. I distributed it to them and even when it was all gone they kept on asking me for more, upon which I turned my pockets inside out and shouted to them "namhuen, namhuen" (I have no more). They, satisfied with the eloquence of my demonstration, gave up their clamoring saying hée hée, which means "well, well"; but they forgot to offer me another drink of aloja.

While on the subject of greetings: these Indians have the custom of tapping the chest of their guests lightly and amicably with their half-closed fist, accompanying these caresses with expressions of good fellowship such as hée, hée, etc. -- (Good, good! etc.).

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco SI7

upon as perfectly natural, and since full reciprocity exists, such an act of apparent liberality does not even evoke feelings of gratitude in those who for the moment are the objects of it. Those who have been travelling and therefore have not produced crops, or those who for some other reason have no means of subsistence for the time being, have a claim on the hospitality of their fellow-tribesmen. Even when there is nowhere a real want the successful hunter or fisher gladly shares his abundance of food with other families of the village, knowing that others will do the same to him on another occasion.

Native law enjoins hospitality not only to fellow-tribesmen but also to members of foreign tribes with which the Indians stand on a friendly footing. The same hospitality and liberality is shown to a white man whom the Indians regard as their friend. For my own part I frequently had, both among the Tobas and the Choroti, personal experience of this Indian hospitality.

In spite of the liberality which appears in the relations of the different members of the community to one another, private property is strictly respected in all the tribes. We can particularly speak of »socialism» in regard to the *land*, which, as I have mentioned before, is considered to belong to the people in general; no Indian, not even a chief, has a direct claim to any part of it above his fellows. The flocks of sheep and goats feed on the common pasture. Similarly the natural products of the country, such as game, fish, wild fruit, honey, and fire-wood, are common property. But as soon as an individual family has taken possession of a piece of this common land for cultivation, its ownership is acknowledged and respected as long as the family actually cultivates it. What the Indian collects of the natural products of the country and what he produces or acquires through his own work — such as clothes, ornaments, weapons and implements, magical instruments, etc. — is also regarded as his exclusive property, although, as soon as food is in question, an unwritten moral law and social sympathy largely induces the individual owner to share it with others. The flocks of course also belong to individual families. The sheep and goats always wear property marks, so that when they are taken home from the pasture in the afternoon the Indians can easily determine who is the owner of each animal.

The lower Chaco tribes, particularly the Choroti and the Ashluslay, do not know of any distinctions between rich and poor, and even among the Tobas it is a comparatively rare thing that a man possesses more than his fellows. Only a few great chiefs who have made successful wars against

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco SI7

Chapter X.

Visiting. Communication with other tribes. Trade.

648 Within the different sub-tribes there is frequent visiting between the families, and similarly there is frequent communication between those sub-tribes which live on a friendly footing with one another. The Choroti likewise have intercourse with certain foreign tribes, especially with the Ashluslay on the lower Pilcomayo and the Tapiete and the Avas on the northern course of the river. With the Mataco on the other hand, the Choroti have at times had strained relations, and the warlike Tobas they fear, avoiding as far as possible having anything to do with them. The friendly intercourse and trade between certain Chaco tribes, who perhaps live at great distances from one another, is of considerable ethnological interest.

574 Among all Indians, visiting is always a more or less ceremonial matter, but in the Chaco these ceremonies are comparatively simple. In their everyday life, when meeting out on the plain or in the forest, the Indians do not use any particular words of salutation. On the other hand, when an [576] Indian pays a visit to another house, and especially when he visits the house of a neighbouring tribe, he, on entering, only pronounces a word equivalent to »I come», »I arrive»; in the Choroti and Mataco language this is *kanám*, in the Toba language *nóvyi*. The host only answers with a word which means, »it is good» (in the Choroti language *eis*, in the Mataco and Ashluslay language *is*, in the Toba *nóin* or *nōtta*). The guest can now take a seat at the door but keeps silence until he is spoken to. This is the rule in all cases where the guest is known and regarded as a friend. If algaroba beer and food is offered to him, this is a particular sign of friendship, and the guest may thereafter speak and move about freely as if he were at home. On the other hand, when the visitor is not welcome but regarded with hatred and suspicion the Indians turn the back and

[p. 98]

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco SI7
Toba SI12
Choroti SK6

M 574

remain silent, perhaps muttering some menacing words. This is particularly the way in which the Tobas receive undesired guests. The best thing for a visitor so received is to leave the Indians as soon as possible, since these treacherous and daring savages would not shrink from taking his life.

C 576

When the Choroti guest leaves the house where he has paid a visit he always says: *yápeh*, or: *ayápeh*, »I go», or »I go back (to my own house)», to which the host only answers: *mah*, »go on!», »hurry on!». The Toba guest, on leaving, says *malhék*, or *kiuo* or *málhe'giuo*, (»I go», »I go back to my house»), the host answering with the word *hamóh* (»hurry on!»).

C 439

The *Choroti* barter with those foreign tribes with whom they maintain friendly intercourse, their own most important article of exchange being dried fish. From the Guarani-speaking Tapiete Indians, and in some cases from the Avas, they receive especially the much appreciated cereal, maize, as well as the red *urucú*-paint, indispensable for painting the face and the body on festival occasions. The *urucú*-shrub, it should be noted, requires a purely tropical climate and does not grow in the Chaco. On the other hand the Choroti barter with the Ashluslay in the south, receiving from them among other things one of their most costly ornaments, a necklace consisting of small buttons cut out from snail's shells and strung closely together. Such a necklace is from three to six yards in length, and is highly valued not only as a pure ornament but also on account of the magical properties ascribed to it. The receiving of these necklaces from the Ashluslay seems to be but a transit-trade, for the latter Indians in their turn buy them from the tribes in the interior of the Chaco, probably from the Lenguas, who according to Mr. Grubb, make such necklaces. Mr. Grubb adds that »these strings of buttons are the money of the people» and that the value of a big necklace is one sheep.[1] As a matter of fact, the Choroti when bartering with the Ashluslay pay one sheep each for these necklaces.

C [435 436]

Of more interest are the commercial connections which the *Tobas* have with neighbouring tribes, especially with the Mataco-Nocténes in the west and the Avas in the north. At any rate there is frequent intercourse between the Bolivian Tobas and the Avas living at the Catholic missions Tarairi, Tihüipa, and Machareti. In connection with the visits which these Indians are in the habit of paying to the country of the Tobas, I had an excellent opportunity of studying primitive Indian trade. The

T 648 439

[1]) Grubb, *op. cit.*, p. 71.